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## **COUNTY CLERK AND COMPTROLLER BLAST STATE LAW FAVORING ILLEGALS OVER POLICE**

*New York State Law, passed within the budget and quietly under the cloak of COVID-19, charges police with a felony if they share illegal immigrant DMV information with fellow police agencies*

**(ERIE COUNTY, NY)** –Erie County Comptroller Stefan Mychajliw and County Clerk Michael Kearns announced today that a new state law passed in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis in April sets a dangerous precedent and puts many of our first responders at risk.

The new law, inserted in the state budget and under the cloak of the COVID-19 pandemic, makes it a felony for law enforcement to share New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) information with other agencies also tasked with enforcing immigration laws. Clerk Kearns and Comptroller Mychajliw, two bi-partisan lawmakers, blasted the new law and are calling on Governor Cuomo to immediately reverse course and strike it down.

“Governor Cuomo and radical progressives care more about illegal immigrants than police. It is sick to pass this law that favors the lives of illegals ahead of law enforcement under the cloak and cover of COVID-19,” said Erie County Comptroller Stefan Mychajliw, referencing the law that allows illegal immigrants to get a New York State driver’s license, while also preventing different police agencies from sharing DMV information.

“Now it’s a felony for police officers to share information with other cops. Insane. Stupid. Outrageous. There aren’t enough adjectives to describe how despicable this new law is. Our men and women in uniform are tasked with keeping us safe. Now Governor Cuomo and state lawmakers want to put handcuffs on cops, turning them into criminals for doing their job. Only in New York do lawmakers favor illegals over law abiding citizens.”

Comptroller Mychajliw and Clerk Kearns spoke out last year in opposition to the Green Light law, which gives illegal immigrants the right to obtain driver’s licenses, saying it violates federal law and could have numerous and grave consequences for law enforcement and families.

“I stand strong with law enforcement and will support the Constitution of the United States of America. I took an oath to uphold the laws of the land. I take that oath seriously. The Green Light law is a slap in the face to law abiding, hard-working taxpayers. Adding insult to injury, New York State shoved this new law through in the budget, hoping no one was paying attention.”

“Remember, I feel so strongly that illegal immigrants should not get a driver’s license that I’m in court right now suing the Governor over this,” said Erie County Clerk Michael P. Kearns.

Clerk Kearns oversees the operations of the Department of Motor Vehicles in Erie County. Comptroller Mychajliw wrote to all county clerks across New York State, including the Erie County Clerk's Office, informing employees they could report illegal immigrants applying for licenses to the Erie County Comptroller's Whistleblower Hotline.

"By definition, illegal immigrants broke the law by coming here illegally. Governor Cuomo and state lawmakers then thought it was a good idea to reward their illegal behavior with a valid license. Remember, these individuals are here illegally. They are breaking the law. Now those same politicians in Albany quietly pushed through legislation that gives these illegal immigrants greater protections than taxpayers and now police," added Clerk Kearns.

Comptroller Mychajliw and Clerk Kearns say all law enforcement agencies need to be given the ability to work together and share necessary information in order to pursue lawbreakers. The new law prevents them from being able to do that.

"My family came here the right way. Played by the rules. Respected the law. Became citizens in the greatest nation on earth. I strongly support legal immigration. A country without borders is not a country. What kind of State are we living in?"

"The biggest obstacle in stopping the attacks on America on 9/11 was lack of communication amongst law enforcement. Police worked in silos. No one shared information. Now Governor Cuomo wants to charge cops with a felony for communicating with one another about illegal activity. God forbid law enforcement is not able to prevent further crime or bloodshed because they're afraid to be charged with a felony just for doing their jobs," added Comptroller Mychajliw.

"The mission of police and the reason they risk their lives each day is to keep all of us safe," concluded Clerk Kearns. "Now apparently Albany politicians don't want them to protect our families. This puts police in a terrible predicament of not being able to share some information about a suspect with federal law enforcers."

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